

SPSO decision report

Case: 201803163, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained that the board unreasonably delayed in diagnosing secondary breast cancer. Following treatment for breast cancer, Mrs C underwent annual check-ups with a consultant surgeon where she complained of a lump and pain near her reconstructed breast (a breast that has been reshaped following a mastectomy (breast removal)). Mrs C said that these reports were not appropriately investigated.

We took independent advice from a specialist in breast cancer. We found that investigations were carried out when Mrs C first reported a lump near the reconstruction and that relevant guidelines did not recommend routine mammography (x-ray of the breast) of the reconstructed site and associated axilla (underarm). We considered that the board had practised within the national recommendations and Mrs C was followed up and examined regularly. We also found that when Mrs C presented with a new lump it was investigated and treated in a timely manner. We found that the standard of medical care was reasonable and there had not been an unreasonable delay in diagnosing the recurring cancer. We did not uphold the complaint.